

Meeting Minutes – Draft

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority

POLICY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Tuesday, February 5, 2019, 1:30PM-3:30PM

Attendance

Jacki Bacharach

Marianne Kim

Seleta Reynolds

John Bwarie

Steve Lantz

Arthur Sohikian

Mark Christoffels

Bryn Lindblad

Joss Tillard-Gates

Roderick Diaz

Paul-Albert Marquez

Ann Wilson

Terry Dipple

Jessica Meaney

Thomas Yee

Cecilia Estolano

Hilary Norton

David Feinberg

Nancy Pfeffer

Cesar Hernandez

Stephanie Ramirez

Randy Johnson

Mary Reyes

PAC Business and Minutes

The PAC meeting started with roll-call. Darrell Clarke, Metro Citizen’s Advisory Council, participated via phone. Ms. Estolano laid the groundwork for the Special PAC Meeting to focus on discussion of and input on the Re-Imagining of LA County (formerly Twenty-Eight by ’28). Kalieh Honish then spoke on new members—including Ann Wilson and Margaret Lin of Arroyo Verdugo Communities Joint Power Authority (AVCJPA), and Joss Tillard-Gates of Enterprise Community Partners—as well as vacancies still available. Ms. Honish urged members to submit nominations and mentioned that PAC members are now listed on PAC website.

Joss then introduced himself as the new PAC member from Enterprise Community partners and gave brief summary of his experience. Ms. Estolano, on behalf of the PAC, thanked him for his participation.

Re-Imagining LA County

Nadine Lee, Metro’s Interim Chief of Staff, presented on Re-Imagining LA County which was presented to the Board on January 24, 2019. Ms. Lee gave background to the presentation stating that it was seeking Board approval for baseline assumptions and the financial plan they were tasked to put together; the Board did not approve these decisions. Two motions resulted from this presentation and Board item, which were discussed in the presentation. [\[Link\]](#)

Ultimately, Metro staff asked the Board to carry out a congestion pricing study to determine options and feasibility. The Board has yet to approve this plan.

Therese McMillan stressed that congestion pricing would impact the system as a whole and that equity would be an integral part to any congestion pricing scenario.

Public Comment

Laura Raymond from Alliance for Community Transit wanted to know how the revenue would be prioritized—money would be for acceleration but how would that affect bus service? Ms. Raymond also stated that she believes transit-oriented communities and displacement are also sacred items.

Carter Rubin, of Natural Resources Defense Council, stated that his organization, alongside Transform from the Bay Area, co-authored report on equity and congestion pricing, and how equity should be incorporated into the process rather than after. Mr. Rubin stated that he would be willing to share the report with anyone interested.

Gloria Oلمان, from the City of LA, asked if there would be money left over after Re-Imagining LA County. Therese McMillan stated that this, and the other comments, is what the congestion pricing study would look at since, currently, there are no answers.

PAC Chair, Cecilia Estolano, noted that Ann Wilson was present at meeting and thanked her for her participation in the PAC since the AVCJPA recently formed.

Discussion

Ms. Estolano opened the meeting up for PAC discussion and hoped to reach consensus on concerns regarding Re-Imagining LA County.

Mark Christoffels (San Gabriel Valley COG) kicked off discussion by stating that Re-Imagining LA County and congestion pricing should be separate issues as both have merit. Mr. Christoffels also mentioned that decisions should not be revenue driven but rather results oriented. Finally, use of incoming revenue should be programmed via a bottoms-up approach.

Jacki Bacharach (South Bay Cities COG) brought up Orange County's congestion pricing lanes as evidence that Metro's concept is revenue driven as opposed to being aimed at reducing congestion. Ms. Bacharach also expressed concern that Twenty-Eight by '28 is 'getting lost' and that a calendar is needed so that constituents can see where, why, and how their local money is being spent; taxing TNCs a city issue, not a Metro issue, since they use local streets and rights-of-way; local return and subregional money under this new plan seems problematic since some projects benefit the county as a whole and should not be tied solely to local jurisdictions; is interested in what Metro staff will say to the Committees in February.

Ann Wilson (AVCJPA) wanted to know how local return would be used in light of the Re-Imagining LA County plan and also stated that it would be very difficult to take back Measure M local return money since many cities have already programmed these funds; recommended that Metro put congestion pricing at the bottom of their toolkit.

Bryn Lindblad (Climate Resolve) recommended there be a bigger focus on bus service and less focus on who is exempt from congestion pricing plans and instead create a 'maximally transformative program' to spread mobility across the region; that highway widening projects are not sacred because they do not produce mobility benefits or equity.

Cesar Hernandez (Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition) would like to see a focus on displacement and a Metro analysis of mobility beyond the Olympics; what inputs would be used as compared to LRTP or the Short Range Financial Forecast; and more community engagement to differentiate the LRTP outreach and Twenty-Eight by '28.

Terry Dipple (Las Virgenes/Malibu COG) asked if Metro could look at a "Twenty by '28" [sic] and "living within the means we have". Mr. Dipple highlighted the fact that Metro recently went out to taxpayers to approve Measure M, only to seek more money two years later. Mr. Dipple also commended the idea of lowering fares and focusing on projects with an equity focus and that he would rather see projects like these instead of the proposed Twenty-Eight by '28 plan.

Stephanie Ramirez (AARP) suggested there be a line drawn to connect the dots of Vision 2028, mobility, equity, etc. Ms. Ramirez also stated that the people of LA County are paying taxes but will not see the benefits, especially in low-income communities. She also suggested that because of things like congestion pricing people will be forced to move farther and farther out thereby exacerbating the problem. AARP is looking closely at this plan especially since more and more older adults are forced into homelessness and closed by saying this is "very alarming to us".

Seleta Reynolds (LADOT) stated that this ask for funds would keep happening since ridership is going down and, therefore, fare revenue is dipping below expectations; the 3% contribution will be more difficult to abide by, in part due to the dip in farebox revenue; she agreed with Mr. Dipple in that we cannot have it all and need to live within our means; congestion pricing is necessary but a more useful screen for it is how it would achieve Metro's Vision 2028, not how it would achieve project acceleration; there is no mention in the presentation on the work of SCAG's congestion reduction study which would be a vital tool; cities are not interested in taxing TNCs to the benefit of Metro and to the detriment of cities, echoing Ms. Bacharach's comments. Ms. Reynolds stated that she would be interested in advocating that the State introduce taxes on TNCs, however. Ms. Reynolds also pointed out that Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti would like to have congestion pricing and Twenty-Eight by '28 untangled.

Hilary Norton (FAST) emphasized that LA County is a multi-centered region and planning needs to take that into account; supportive of NextGen and BRT studies but the feeling is that these studies have a limited budget while rail studies are unlimited; and Metro should look at congestion pricing in relation to sales tax and not have to lose revenue on one due to the competition with the other.

Roderick Diaz (Metrolink) shared a handout elaborated on Metrolink's thoughts with focus on multi-dimensional equity (e.g., transit opportunity, and modal equity); all transit should be at the table beyond Metro bus and rail; and the benefits of a plan should be clear with respect to returning value and

performance-based benefits. Lastly, Mr. Diaz emphasized that Metrolink is a key part of congestion reduction in LA County and can continue to play a role.

Arthur Sohikian (NCTC) agreed with Mr. Dipple and Ms. Reynolds in terms of “living within our means”; echoed the sentiments that Twenty-Eight by '28 needs to be de-coupled from congestion pricing but is supportive of both, independently.

Paul-Albert Marquez (Caltrans) agree with pricing study and Twenty-Eight by '28 and is interested in the study, its timeframe and stakeholder involvement; questioned the impact on goods movement; and stated that his agency is also looking at other revenue streams.

Thomas Yee (LA Thrives) stated that he was never excited by Twenty-Eight by '28 but rather the transformative ideas and communications; NextGen is supposed to be a revenue neutral study but this proposal seems revenue driven; Metro is working on the equity platform currently but needs to be in a place to apply equity to any proposals for Twenty-Eight by '28 study.

Jessica Meaney (Investing In Place), continuing with Mr. Yee’s comments, stated that the equity working group is farther along now; questioned how the 28 projects accelerate equity and echoed Mr. Yee’s sentiment on equity but added that we need to acknowledge the low-income driver; asked what the point of an LRTP was after this study since it seems to take the place of and LRTP; and agreed with Mr. Christoffels that it should be a bottoms-up approach.

David Feinberg (Santa Monica Big Blue Bus) agreed with many previous comments; stated that bus service should be the backbone of Re-Imagining LA County and that NextGen should look at more bus service.

Nancy Pfeffer (Gateway Cities COG) agreed with a lot that had already been said including that Twenty-Eight by '28 should be separate from congestion pricing; echoed the sentiment that Metro should be looking at the SCAG work already done; stated that, counter to other opinions earlier, the acceleration of project would help her COG cities; stated that equity, including flexibility in transportation options, is important; and echoed Mr. Marquez’s thoughts that goods movement is an important point of discussion.

Chair Estolano then thanked everyone for their input and noticed many common themes. Ms. Estolano then asked if drafting a letter to the Board is the right approach. Ms. McMillan concurred with the approach and offered chronology of the process to give greater context. Ultimately, PAC settled on five key points to bring to the Board:

1. Decouple 28x28 from Re-Imagining LA County and its recommendations, particularly any study of congestion pricing.
2. Study how congestion pricing can be used as a tool to help us achieve our goals for equity, mobility and access to opportunity.

3. Clarify the relationship of 28x28 priorities to the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Vision 2028 Strategic Plan and other major plans.
4. Keep promises for local return, Multi-Year Subregional Programs, and other Measure M local programs.
5. Address transit comprehensively.

The PAC also discussed regulation of TNCs at a local level—not Metro led—but agreed that this was not enough agreement that merited inclusion in the letter to the Metro Board.

Ms. Estolano then stated that the draft would be sent around to PAC members for edits or further comments which would be due by close of business, February 7, 2019. Ms. Estolano reminded the PAC that any comments are made on behalf of the PAC group and not necessarily the COG or specific organization. Ms. McMillan further stated that cities are welcome to send their own letters to raise their own issues. Ms. Estolano moved to draft a letter, Mr. Bwarie seconded with no dissenting votes.

A representative from Metro Board Chair Keuhl announced that the Re-Imagining LA County item is going to be discussed at the Planning and Programming and Executive Management Committee meetings later this month and that it would be another opportunity to comment.

The meeting adjourned.